(d) whether the Ministry found any grey areas or difficult pockets where both the countries need to be more careful and vigilant looking at the disturbances in the North-Eastern region of India; and

(e) if so, the details thereon and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Border trade through Nathula resumed with effect from July 6, 2006 at the Changgu border trade mart at Sherathan on the Indian side and Rengingang trade mart on the Chinese side. Border trade through Nathu La will take place from June 1-September 30 every year. It will, however, be open to the designated authorities of the two sides to extend or reduce the period of trade when considered necessary on account of exigencies like weather conditions.

(c) Government are positive that the quantum of border trade through Nathu La will gradually develop, though the precise volume is difficult to predict at this early juncture.

(d) and (e) Arrangements for border trade through Nathula have been put in place after taking into consideration all relevant aspects, including those related to security.

Summit at Shanghai

312. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the heads of the States and Governments, except India were present in the meet of Shanghai; and

(b) whether the visit of the Indian Prime Minister would have helped in strengthening the friendship between India and China, especially in this year of friendship?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The Heads of State of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Pakistan

and Mongolia attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit which was held in Shanghai on 15 June, 2006.

Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister, was not able to attend the SCO Summit due to domestic pre-occupations. India was represented by Shri Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. Shri Deora called on the Chinese President Mr. Hu Jintao during his visit. Both leaders exchanged views on issues of common interest and expressed satisfaction over the recent positive developments in India-China relations. They also noted that frequent exchanges between the leaders of the two countries had contributed to greater mutual understanding between the two countries and reinforced their friendly ties.

Demarcation of boundary in Rann of Kutch

313. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there were differences on demarcation of boundary in the marshy Sir Creek area in the Rann of Kutch and officials of India and Pakistan had two rounds of talks recently on Sir Creek as part of the Indo-Pak Composite Dialogue Process to resolve the long pending dispute over 96 km. strip of water dividing both the countries in the marshy land; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Talks on Sir Creek were held on August 6-7, 2004 in New Delhi where both India and Pakistan presented their positions and exchanged views on the various issues involved. During the next round of discussions in Rawalpindi on May 28-29, 2005 the two sides agreed to continue their discussions aimed at an early resolution of the issue for the mutual benefit of the two countries. In the third round of Composite Dialogue discussions on the Sir Creek, held on May 25-26, 2006 in New Delhi, delineation of the land boundary and delimitation of the maritime boundary in the Sir Creek area were discussed. It was agreed to conduct a joint survey of the Sir Creek and adjoining areas and waters between November 2006 and March 2007. It was also agreed that the extent and modalities of the joint survey